

Meeting Summary of the SANBAG Board of Directors

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■ Cost projections soar for future Measure I projects; workshop set

Dramatic increases in costs of future Measure I projects will make planning and prioritizing freeway, interchange and major street projects a huge challenge, SANBAG Executive Director Tony Grasso said.

Members of the Board of Directors will meet for an afternoon workshop on May 31 to review cost projections and revenue forecasts for the Measure I 2010-2040 program approved by San Bernardino County voters in 2004.

During the past three years, costs have soared. Right-of-way expenses have increased 80%, utility relocation costs have grown 120%, roadway construction costs have grown 90% and structures costs have jumped 77%. For example, during the development of the Measure I Expenditure Plan in 2003, SANBAG estimated a \$610 million price tag for the widening of Interstate 10 from Ontario to Yucaipa. New figures place this cost at \$1.25 billion, more than double the original estimate.

The workshop will include presentations and discussions about 1990-2010 Measure I projects, 2010-2040 Measure I projects, economic growth forecasts, project costs, inflation and project priorities.



Crews construct falsework at the University Street bridge at Interstate 10 in Redlands. Plans call for further widening of I-10 in the 2010-2040 Measure I program.

■ Early work to start on Colton Crossing

SANBAG will serve as the lead agency for preliminary engineering and preparation of an environmental document for the separation of Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad tracks in Colton.

The California Transportation Commission last week approved \$2.2 million through the State Transportation Improvement Program for early work on this project. The separation of these heavily-used transcontinental rail lines — which now are at the same grade — will allow freight to flow more rapidly through the area. All of the rail freight that leaves southern California must use this crossing.

■ SANBAG to remove 150 call boxes in SB Valley

Declining call box use and the start of a Freeway Service Patrol program will lead to the removal of 150 roadside highway call boxes on Interstates 10 and 215 in the San Bernardino Valley this fall.

Since call boxes were installed in 1990, the program has responded to more than 1.4 million calls countywide. Call box volume peaked in 1994 with 142,000 calls that year. Volume is continuing to decline, largely due to widespread cellular phone use; 25,000 calls are expected this year.

The launch of a Freeway Service Patrol program in the San Bernardino Valley earlier this year makes it feasible to reduce the spacing between call boxes in that area. The remaining boxes will be one mile apart, rather than the existing half-mile apart, on both sides of the highways. Boxes will not be removed from areas that have hills or grades or that are near interchanges, because these locations typically have higher call volumes.

The cost to remove the boxes will total \$75,000. However, this cost will be recovered quickly, due to a \$65,000 per year reduction in cellular fees and maintenance expenses.

Down the road . . .

- May 10: Administrative Committee and Budget Workshop, 9 a.m.
- May 11: Major Projects Committee, 9 a.m.
- May 17: Plans & Programs Committee, 12 noon
- May 18: Committee Rail Committee, 12 noon
- May 31: Measure I Workshop, 1-4 p.m., University of Redlands

Hate gas prices? Share it, don't bear it!

Ridesharing programs help commuters cope with high gasoline costs

With gas prices topping \$3 a gallon, SANBAG reminds commuters to give ridesharing a try. In partnership with the Riverside County Transportation Commission, SANBAG has two programs, Option Rideshare and Rideshare Plus, to offer incentives for using alternate methods to travel to and from work. In addition, a website dedicated to helping commuters find rideshare partners, bus routes and other smart ways to travel, is growing in popularity.

In the 2005 San Bernardino County Annual Survey, taken last November and December, county residents noted changes in their driving habits, due to rising gas prices. About 11% of the respondents said that they now are carpooling, taking the bus or train or riding their bike to and from work. When asked about their future commuting plans, 18% said that they intend to employ alternate methods of traveling to and from work.

This month's *Street Smart* takes a look at ways to save money, time and the environment by traveling smarter and sharing rides.

Option Rideshare

SANBAG offers a rideshare program that rewards participants with a \$2 incentive for each day that they carpool, vanpool, ride the bus, ride Metrolink, bicycle, walk or telecommute to work during a three-month introductory period.

To qualify for the \$2 per day incentive program, known as Option Rideshare, participants must meet the following criteria:

- Be a resident of San Bernardino County
- Currently drive alone to a job in southern California
- Have not participated in a rideshare program within the past 90 days
- Have not received an incentive from another publicly funded commuter incentive program
- Work for an employer who is registered or is willing to register for the Option Rideshare program.
- Use an alternate commuting method at least five days per month

Rideshare Plus

After the three-month Option Rideshare trial period has ended, incentives continue in the form of a club card with discounts from area merchants. Participants who continue to share rides or use alternate commuting methods at least one day per week can join Rideshare Plus, a program that provides promotions and prize drawings. Members receive a discount card with offers from more than 500 local retailers, such as restaurants, bookstores, hair salons, auto service



More than 40,000 people ride Metrolink trains each day in the five-county system. Metrolink offers a convenient, economical way to travel to and from work.



SkYROCKETING gas prices have local employees dreading a trip to the pump. More San Bernardino County residents are considering alternate commuting methods.

centers, car washes, skating parks, bowling alleys, video rental stores and more.

There is no fee to participate in either Rideshare Plus or Option Rideshare.

Guaranteed Ride Home

SANBAG helps sponsor a regional program that guarantees rideshare participants a ride home from work, in case of illness or other emergency. Once an employer registers for this program, a ridesharing employee is allowed four emergency taxi rides during the year at no cost. This gives employees peace of mind when they decide to rideshare.

CommuteSmart.info

SANBAG co-sponsors the CommuteSmart.info website, which helps drivers find carpool and vanpool partners, Park and Ride lots, and bus, train and bike routes throughout the Southland.

Visits to the ridesharing section of this site climbed 57% between March and April, and the overall number of hits to the site increased 97.5% between the two months.

For more information about ridesharing, visit www.CommuteSmart.info, www.sanbag.ca.gov or call 1-866-RIDESHARE (1-866-742-3742).